

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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AF-06 SAB-01 SAM-01 /088 W  
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R 031526Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9762  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMCONSULATE ALEXANDRIA  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 1417

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, XF

SUBJECT: SADAT'S HAWADITH INTERVIEW

1. SUMMARY. IN INTERVIEW WITH HAWADITH, SADAT LAMBASTED SARG AND ASAD FOR DELIBERATELY DISTORTING NATURE OF LEBANESE PROBLEM, FOR PLAYING GAME OF ARAB UNITY FOR SELFISH PURPOSES, FOR USING SA'IQA TO OBTAIN "TUTELAGE" OVER PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT, AND FOR FAILING TO PLAY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN ME PEACE PROCESS. HUSSAIN IS ACCUSED OF HYPOCRITICAL "CLOWNING." IN ENIGMATIC REFERENCE, SADAT STATED PRESIDENT FORD HAD PROMISED "SOMETHING MORE" THAT RECOGNITION OF PLO. MOST STRIKING OF ALL, IS SADAT'S HINT THAT SOVIETS HAVE CEASED OVERHAUL MIG ENGINES. END SUMMARY.

2. AHRAH FEBRUARY 3 PRINTS FULL TEXT OF INTERVIEW GIVEN  
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JANUARY 24 BY SADAT TO SALIM LAWZI, EDITOR OF BEIRUT

WEEKLY HAWADITH. INTERVIEW DEALS MOSTLY WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INCLUDES SOME SHARP CRITICISM OF ASAD AND BA'ATH, AS WELL AS USSAIN AND SOVIETS. HIGHLIGHTS FOLLOW.

A. DIFFERENCES IN SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN ME STRATEGY. IN GOE VIEW, ARABS WON OCTOBER WAR AND MUST NOW KEEP UP MOMENTUM AND PRESERVE INITIATIVE. SARG BELIEVES ARAB DID NOT WIN THE WAR. CITING DE BORCHGRAVE'S ASAD INTERVIEW, SADAT SAID ASAD APPARENTLY BELIEVES WAR WAS THEATRICAL PLAY ARRANGED BY GOE, USG, AND GOI WITH RESULTS AGREED BEFOREHAND. IF, AS DE BORCHGRAVE TOLD LAWZI IN SWITZERLAND, ASAD WAS MISQUOTED, THEN, WHY HAS DAMASCUS NOT ISSUED DENIAL. SARG FURTHER BELIEVES INITIATIVE IS NOT IN ARAB HANDS, THAT USG IS IMPERIALIST POWER AND ITS SETTLEMENT EFFORTS WORTH NOTHING, THAT PEACEFUL STEPS ARE WASTE OF TIME, AND THAT ARABS MUST PREPARE FOR MILITARY BATTLE. SADAT STRESSED EGYPT WILL MAKE NATURAL SHIFT INTO MILITARY SETTLEMENT ONLY WHEN STAGE OF DIPLOMATIC EFFORT IS COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED. IN MEANTIME, EGYPT WILL BUILD MILITARY STRENGTH TO FACE ALL EVENTUALITIES.

B. SYRIAN-BACKED SA'IQA'S GRAB FOR POWER. IN STRONG, THOUGH INDIRECT STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR ARAFAT AND FATAH, SADAT AGGRESSIVELY ATTACKED SYRIAN "TUTELAGE" OVER PALESTINIANS WHICH, HE SAID, IS NOW COMPLETE. HE RELATED STORY OF LEBANESE CAR DEALER WHO THIS SUMMER HAD TEN OF HIS CARS STOLEN BY SA'IQA AND WHO, WITH JUMBLATT'S FULL KNOWLEDGE, WAS FORCED TO PAY PROTECTION MONEY TO MUHAIN. AND IT IS ZUHAYR MUHSIN THAT SYRIANS ARE NOW NOMINATING TO REPLACE ARAFAT, SDAT MARVELLED. EGYPT COULD EASILY HAVE FORMED ITS OWN PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATION (AS SYRIA DID) TO SABOTAGE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT FROM WITHIN WHILE PRETENDING PUBLICLY TO DEFEND IT.

C. SYRIA IN LEBANON. SYRIA DELIBERATELY DISTORTED LEBANESE PROBLEM, COVERING REAL SELF-INTEREST BY CLAIMING THERE WAS MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN CONFLICT, WHICH WAS A "LIE." WHATEVER SYRIAN MOTIVES MIGHT BE, SADAT INSTRUCTED HIS FONMIN TO SUPPORT SYRIAN OR ANY OTHER ARAB EFFORTS, SUCH AS KUWAIT'S TO END FIGHTING. HE TOSSED GRATUITOUS BOUQUET AT GOL  
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CHRISTIAN PRESIDENT: "I CHERISH SPECIAL EMOTIONS FOR FRANJIYA."

D. SYRIAN UNITY EFFORTS. SDAT, SAYING HE IS "UNIONIST" BY NATURE, WARNED AGAINST A SYRIAN-JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN UNITY. IF, HE POINTED OUT, MORE IS BITTEN OFF THAN CAN BE CHEWED, ALL ARAB MISFORTUNES WILL INCREASE.

E. HUSSAIN'S HYPOCRISY. SADAT SAID HUSSAIN IS FREE TO

DO AS HE WISHES, BUT THE INITIATIVE IS NOT IN SYRIAN HANDS -  
UNLESS BLACKMAIL IS CONSIDERED TO BE INITIATIVE. IT IS EGYPT  
WHICH HAS MOVED FORWARD ABROAD. IF EGYPT REFUSES TO GO TO  
MEPC, GENEVA WILL NOT CONVENE. SYRIA REFUSED TO GO DECEMBER  
1973, BUT MEPC CONVENED ANYWAY. ASAD FOLLOWED SADAT TO  
IRAN, YUGOSLAVIA, BULGARIA, ROMANIA, NOT OTHER WAY AROUND.  
SADAT BROUGHT HUSSAIN TO ALEXANDRIA, SO ASAD "RAN" TO  
HUSSAIN. HUSSAIN'S MISTAKE IS HE IMAGINES HE CAN PLAY  
EGYPT OFF AGAINST SYRIA. I SENT HIM FRANK MESSAGE THAT I  
SAY SAME THING PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY AND URGED HIM TO BE  
FRANK. SYRIA WITHOUT JORDAN WOULD BE AN "OPEN FRONT", SO  
I SUPPORT ANY KIND OF (REAL) UNITY. BUT I DO NOT LIKE  
CLOWNING.

F. ARAB OPPOSITION TO SINAI II. SYRIANS AND PALESTINIANS  
SHOULD THANK EGYPT FOR OCTOBER WAR AND SINAI AI AND SINAI II,  
WHICH CUT ISRAEL DOWN TO HER NATURAL SIZE. IF ASAD DOES NOT AGREE  
TO GOLAN II, HE IS FREE TO DO SO, BUT I KNOW THE REAL REASON  
HE DID NOT MEET WITH PRESIDENT FORD, WHICH I WILL NOT REVEAL  
TO AVOID EMBARRASSING EITHER OF THEM. PLO STATEMENT ACCUSING  
ME OF BARTERING LAND WAS WRITTEN AND ISSUED IN DAMASCUS.

G. PLEDGE FROM PRESIDENT FORD. SADAT DID NOT ELABORATE  
ON HIS STATEMENT THAT HE HAS RECEIVED FROM PRES FORD A PLEDGE  
INVOLVING  
"SOMETHING MORE" THAN SIMPLE RECOGNITION OF PLO, WHICH HE IS  
NOT AT LIBERTY TO DISCLOSE.

H. SOVIET PRESSURE TO ALLEVIATE EFFECTS OF CANCELLATION  
BREZHNEV VISIT, SOVIETS SENT SMALL PARTY ONLY OF ARMS OBLIGATED  
IN 1973 AND 1974 CONTRACTS. "WHAT IS MORE HORRIBLE" IS ISSUE  
OF AIRPLANE ENGINES, SINCE IF A PLANE IS GROUNDED IT  
OBVIOUSLY CANNOT BE USED. SOVIETS ARE EXERTING MORE AND MORE  
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PRESSURE, BUT SADAT HAS DECIDED NOT TO RESORT TO DEFAMATION  
AND HAS ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO WORK FOR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

3. COMMENT: IN INTERVIEW, SADAT FOR FIRST TIME PUBLICLY  
HINTS THAT SOVIETS ARE NO LONGER MAKING FACILITIES  
AVAILABLE FOR OVERHAUL OF MIG ENGINES (CAIRO 1290 NOTAL).  
ALSO FOR FIRST TIME, GOE PUBLIC OFFICIAL HAS COMMENTED ON  
DE BORCHGRAVE INTERVIEW, WHICH ALLEGED ASAD HAD CLAIMED  
OCTOBER WAR WAS PUT-UP JOB BY SADAT IN CONSPIRACY WITH  
GOI AND USG. INTERVIEW ALSO BRINGS OUT INTO OPEN FOR FIRST  
TIME SADAT'S IMPATIENCE WITH HUSSAIN WHO, AS WE HAVE  
PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, SADAT BELIEVES IS PLAYING OPPORTUNISTIC  
GAME WITH SYRIA AND EGYPT. SADAT HAS ALSO ESCALATED SEVERAL  
NOTCHES IN HIS PROPAGANDA WAR WITH DAMASCUS BY BOTH SUBSTANCE  
AND TONE OF HIS REMARKS ABOUT SYRIAN INTERFERENCE IN PLO

AFFAIRS (WHICH IS VIOLATION OF RABAT SUMMIT DECISION)AND  
ALLEGED SYRIAN MACHINATIONS IN LEBANON AND JORDAN. ALSO  
STRIKING ARE SADAT'S MYSTERIOUS HINTS ABOUT PUTATIVE PLEDGE  
BY PRESIDENT FORD VIS-A-VIS PALSTINIANS AND HIS DARK  
IMPLICATION THAT ASAD WOULD BE DISTRESSED IF REAL REASON FOR  
HIS NOT MEETING PRESIDENT FORD WERE TO BE MADE PUBLIC.  
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